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PP RUEHQU  
DE RUEHPU #0742 1102014  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 202014Z APR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5895  
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1505  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY 0065  
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1328  
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 0784  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1196

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR  
DRL  
S/CRS  
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR LAC/CAR  
INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [HA](#) [BL](#) [XM](#)

SUBJECT: MINUSTAH POSITIVE ON BOLIVIAN VISIT

¶1. (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified -- please protect accordingly.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: MINUSTAH's director of political affairs Gerardo Lechevallier told Poloff on April 18 that the Bolivian Minister of Defense had reassured SRSG Edmond Mulet that Bolivia would maintain its troops in Haiti. The Brazilian Ambassador told Ambassador Sanderson that he was pleased with the visit and that the Brazilians will continue to encourage the Bolivians to stay. MINUSTAH political officer Louisa Loreda explained that in preparation for the visit, anti-MINUSTAH news reports from La Paz that called for a Bolivian troop withdrawal from Haiti had caused concern. The visit results were positive, however, and the Bolivians were impressed by the UN operations. End summary.

¶3. (SBU) The Bolivian delegation visited Haiti to assess its participation with UN peacekeeping missions in Haiti and the DRC. Reportedly, the defense minister, Walker San Miguel, said that the issue will be discussed in the Bolivian parliament, but that he and President Evo Morales support Bolivian participation in UN peacekeeping missions. Minister Miguel assured SRSG Mulet that the Bolivians will remain in Haiti, despite earlier news reports stating otherwise. The Bolivian delegation included the defense minister, military commander, the president of the senate foreign relations commission (the lower house's president canceled at the last minute), and six journalists, according to Loreda.

¶4. (SBU) The Brazilian Ambassador to Haiti told Ambassador Sanderson that the Bolivian delegation was impressed by the UN operations in Haiti. The defense minister reportedly met with Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis, who charmed his audience and convinced the Bolivians of the importance of their participation in MINUSTAH. The Brazilian Ambassador reported that the Bolivian defense minister, in a show of support for the troops, slept in the barracks with the Bolivian troops in Port-au-Prince on his second and final night in Haiti.

¶5. (SBU) Loreda recounted recent events and news out of La Paz in preparation for the visit. She said that beginning in late 2006, there had been numerous anti-MINUSTAH articles/letters published in Latin America. Bolivia's energy minister published an article in November, 2006

calling MINUSTAH a "U.S. occupation force." Later, President Evo Morales suggested prohibiting war in Bolivia's constitution and asked if a country with such aspirations should contribute to MINUSTAH. Also, three Bolivian UN soldiers reportedly denounced the GoB for giving the troops only US \$700 of the US \$1028 that the government receives for each individual troop contribution. (MINUSTAH officers claim this is a standard amount.) In response, the SRSG wrote a letter to the editor for publication in La Razon, a Bolivian newspaper, highlighting the importance of Bolivia's contribution to MINUSTAH. Loreda could not confirm that the letter was published in its entirety, but said that at least other articles in Bolivia referred to the content of the letter.

16. (SBU) Comment: According to U.S. Embassy La Paz, the defense minister announced that Bolivia will maintain its troop presence in Haiti. The important contribution of Latin American countries to the UN force here cannot be overstated.

Bolivia's withdrawal of their 218 troops would be a blow in numbers and moral, and the first crack in the bulwark of solidarity among Latin American countries contributing troops to MINUSTAH.

TIGHE